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Editorial Notes

The statistics of religious bodies in the United States, issued by the Census Bureau last week, shows, in 1906, 186 denominations with 32,934,445 church members. The percentage of population who were church members, was larger by 5.4 per cent in 1906 than in 1890. In local religious bodies or churches, the Protestants increased 27.8 per cent, and the Roman Catholics 27.9 per cent; Methodist bodies, local churches, increased 30.5 per cent, and Baptist local churches 25.9 per cent, these two bodies together embracing much more than one-half of the total church membership.

Under all the conditions, it is encouraging that there should be an increase reported of the total church membership in this country. It makes nearly forty per cent of the entire population. This does not include baptized children, but only professed Christians, actually enrolled in the churches. Out of every hundred of the greatly mixed population, including pagans, Mohammedans, unevangelized, and unbelievers of all kinds, coming from many lands, forty have stood up to confess the name of Christ voluntarily. Around them are many more who may be called adherents, who attend the services of the churches, support their work and are more or less affected in life by their influences.

The Outlook for last week was much interested in the memorial of Uncle Warner Liscomb, the faithful and esteemed servant of Dr. Robert L. Dabney, and

his family, which appeared in our columns, August 11. The Outlook's editors, like many more who look on from afar, have much to learn about the South and the relation of the races. Within a fortnight past we have been in the homes of a number of old servants, loyal to their old masters' families, and devout Christians. We would like The Outlook to know Uncle Beverly, badly scarred from wounds received in following his master in the battle of Chancellorsville, loyal and true today, as he was then, and waiting to be called to his better home.

The present position of the Federal Courts, as shown in connection with the Cumberland Church decisions in Tennessee, is that all the claimants who seek to obtain possession of certain property in one State must be citizens of the other State, or else the courts have no jurisdiction in the case. Had this position been held when the well known "Walnut Street Church Case," in Louisville, was in the courts, under demand of a few members colonized for a time over in Indiana for the purpose of getting the case into the Federal Court, the result would have been different. It is interesting to note the advancement of the courts since that case was allowed place and a judgment.

The "Cumberland Presbyterian," which now belongs not to the Cumberland Presbyterians, but to the Northern Presbyterian Church, is reflecting on some "good people who butt in to other people's affairs." Its objection is to the public discussion of the act of the licensure and ordination by the Presbytery of New York of young men who do not accept the Bible as the Word of God. It characterizes the critics as seeking "a stick to beat a rival Church." Such an imputation upon the motives of others is unworthy of our contemporary. We rather impute to all these writers the earnest desire to preserve the purity of the Church of the living God.

Has the "Cumberland Presbyterian" never conceived of the fact that doctrinal laxity is today sapping the foundations of our Churches? Has it not realized that the question of doctrinal faithfulness is one that may produce divisions in the Church, and that is today a barrier to some phases of Church union? The best friends of Christ must ever protest against a disparagement of the Word of God.